

be to put them all in one big bill, kind of delay and delay and delay, and then send it all in one big package, and no telling what's going to be in there. The best way to get the business done—the people's business done is to pass these appropriations bills one at a time and get them to my desk in a expeditious way. Unfortunately, the number-two leader in the Senate, Democrat leader said this: "I don't think it's physically possible for us to do all the bills individually." That's frankly not good enough for the American people.

So obviously, I had something on my mind. And I thank you for giving me a chance to come and share it with you. It's a critical time. I have great respect for the process, and I've got respect for people in Washington, DC. But they're coming at you with new taxes, and I'm going to do everything in my power to stop them. We don't need to raise the taxes on the working people; we don't need to raise the taxes

on our farmers and ranchers; we don't need to raise taxes on the small-business owners. What we need to do is set clear priorities with the people's money, which is defend this homeland, support our troops, and make sure we reduce the deficit and keep this economy growing strong.

As I mentioned earlier in the speech, there's some uncertainty in the economy. But we have dealt with that before, and we can continue to deal with it, particularly if we keep the taxes low.

I'm honored to be back in southern Indiana. It's a thrill to be with you. Thank you for your hospitality. Thank you for being—loving your country. God bless you all. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:43 p.m. at The Grand. In his remarks, he referred to Kerry M. Stemler, chairman, One Southern Indiana; and Gov. Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr., of Indiana.

Statement on Signing the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2008 *November 13, 2007*

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 3222, the "Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2008." The Act appropriates funds needed to support the U.S. Armed Forces as they protect the United States and the American people and advance United States interests around the globe.

The Act contains certain provisions identical to those found in prior bills passed by the Congress that might be construed to be inconsistent with my Constitutional responsibilities (sections 8005, 8009, 8012(b), 8034(b), 8052, 8082, 8085, 8089, 8091, and 8116, and the provision concerning consolidation under the heading "Operation and Maintenance, Defense Wide"). To avoid such potential infirmities, I will interpret and construe such provisions

in the same manner as I have previously stated in regard to those provisions.

The Act also continues through December 14, 2007, funding for Government programs for which the Congress has not yet passed regular appropriations acts. However, the Act does not provide funds needed to support members of the U.S. Armed Forces deployed for combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I expect and urge the Congress to promptly present separate legislation to meet that urgent funding need.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

November 13, 2007.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the “Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008”

November 13, 2007

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 3043, the “Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008.”

This bill spends too much. It exceeds the reasonable and responsible levels for discretionary spending that I proposed to balance the budget by 2012. The Congress is on a path to spend \$205 billion more over the next 5 years than I requested. This puts a balanced budget in jeopardy and risks future tax increases. This year, the Congress plans to overspend my budget by \$22 billion, of which \$10 billion is for increases in this bill. Health care, education, job training, and other goals can be achieved without this excessive spending if the Congress sets priorities.

This bill continues to fund programs that are duplicative or ineffective. The Congress continues to fund 56 programs totaling more than \$3.2 billion that I proposed to terminate because they are duplicative, narrowly focused, or not producing results.

This bill does not sufficiently fund programs that are delivering positive outcomes. For example, Reading First, a critical initiative that is demonstrating results, receives

a 61 percent cut, even though low-income students enrolled in Reading First schools posted a more than 10-point improvement in reading proficiency from 2004 to 2006.

This bill has too many earmarks. I set out clear goals for the Congress to reform the earmarking process. The Congress chose not to put earmarks in bill text, instead including nearly all in report language, and they did not reach the goal of cutting the cost and number of earmarks by at least half. This bill contains more than 2,200 earmarks totaling nearly \$1 billion. Congressional earmarks divert Federal taxpayer funds to localities without the benefit of a merit-based process, resulting in fewer resources for national priorities or unnecessary spending above the requested level.

I urge the Congress to send me a fiscally responsible bill that sets priorities. Americans sent us to Washington to achieve results and be good stewards of their hard-earned tax dollars. Because the legislation violates that commitment, I must veto this bill.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
November 13, 2007.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring America’s Promise Alliance

November 13, 2007

Good evening. Laura and I welcome you all to the White House; sure glad you’re here. Ten years ago, a group of spirited citizens came together in the hope that they could make a difference in the lives of our Nation’s children. In the decade that

followed, that hope became a dream, the dream became a mission, and that mission helped change the lives of countless children across our country.

Through your mentoring programs and your work with at-risk youth, America’s